***What is the Community Affordable Housing Group Looking For?***

We are local people forming into a group who work but can’t afford to buy on the open market. We are looking for land in and around the parish of Stoke Gabriel to enable us to build 10 to 12 houses (2,3,4 bed).

***Why is the new Cavanna site not suitable for your needs?***

The Cavanna site is a development of 53 houses of which 15 are “affordable”, split into 10 rentals and 5 shared ownership. To be able to qualify you must register with Devon and Cornwall Housing (DCH), and are then banded A to E depending on how serious your housing need. Because our group are all working people in rented accommodation, or living with parents as carers, we are all banded band E – of no housing need, so not able to obtain this housing.

***Do the properties remain affordable once built, or are the first owners the only ones to benefit, and can then sell on for large profits?***

We are now formally and legally setting ourselves up as a Community Land Trust. The trust is open to anyone in the community to join, and participate. IT WILL HOLD THE LAND IN PERPITUATY, and the houses will have an allocation policy to ensure that they can only be bought by local people with ties to the village.

We are in the process of researching the various models of this structure but for example;

When a two bed house is built and valued on the open market it could be worth £200,000 and yet we built them for £100,000. Therefore the “affordable” house is 50% of market value. If anyone needs to sell, firstly it must be to someone meeting the allocation policy, and secondly can be no more than this 50%. EG in ten years’ time the same house on the open market is £300,000, the Affordable 50% calculation puts it at £150,000 keeping it affordable.

***How do you intend to build these homes? Is it self-build taking years?***

We are in early stages but once getting any formal agreement on land, planning etc we will have professional contractors lay out the site, and install all the services (Water, electric, sewage) to each house, and create the foundations. Once done another contractor will come in and put up a timber framed houses, roof on, windows/doors in etc to make it watertight. Then the first and second fixes will be carried out, again by contractors.

***What can you pay for the land?***

The advantage that we offer is that as affordable housing it can gain planning permission on “exception” sites. We are looking to work with landowners who really want to help local people in the village that cannot get on the housing ladder in the normal way.

We can access the South Hams District Council “Affordable Housing Fund” to help buy land, and also for SHDC to carry out a “Site sustainability assessment”.

This is very difficult to come to a figure but honestly to make the housing affordable it needs to be around £14,000 per plot of two semi-detached 2 bed houses. We are also able to offer a plot for the land owner to build there own property, that can then be sold on the open market if they wish.

***I have further questions; how can I make contact?***

Please feel free to email Tom Morris on mail@sgsb.org.uk or call him on 07799 403788. Alternatively, we can arrange a meeting with Tom Morris and South Hams District Council.